

UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR
CYCLICAL PROGRAM REVIEW (CPR)
FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: ENGLISH AND CREATIVE WRITING
UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE PROGRAMS
April 2026

Executive Summary of the Cyclical Program Review of the Department of English and Creative Writing

In accordance with the University's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external review and the internal responses of the undergraduate and graduate programs in the Department of English and Creative Writing.

In addition to identifying the strengths of the programs, together with opportunities for program improvement and enhancement, the report prioritizes the recommendations that have been selected for implementation and sets out a plan (including the agent(s) responsible for addressing the recommendations and deadline dates) for follow-through. Timelines for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations are built into the process, with areas reporting mid-cycle on their progress to the Senate Program Development Committee, or earlier where there are significant concerns requiring urgent follow-up.

The Department of English and Creative Writing 2024-2025 Self-Study submitted to the Office of Quality Assurance on June 30, 2025, included: 1) a summary of recommendations and actions from the last review; 2) descriptions and analysis of the programs, their learning outcomes, curriculum structure, modes of delivery, assessment methods, and student experience; 3) information on enrolments as well as financial, physical, and human resources; and 4) the program data including the standard data package provided by the Office of Quality Assurance. Included in the appendices to the Self-Study were faculty member CVs and undergraduate and graduate course syllabi.

The Department of English and Creative Writing programs were reviewed by Dr. Vanessa Warne (Department of English, Theatre, Film, and Media, University of Manitoba), Dr. Jeffrey William Donaldson (Department of English and Cultural Studies, McMaster University) and Prof. Gemma Smyth (Faculty of Law, University of Windsor). In addition to assessing the Self-Study, the Review Team conducted a two-day in-person site visit on November 18-19, 2025, which included meetings with faculty, students, staff, undergraduate, graduate, creative writing, and recruitment and liaison committees, the academic librarian, the Associate Vice-President, Academic, the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Head of the Department, and the Dean of Graduate Studies.

In their report (January 13, 2026), the Review Team confirmed that the undergraduate and graduate programs meet the IQAP evaluation criteria and are aligned with the University's mission, vision, and strategic plan, and noted that "[i]n both its curriculum and department culture, [the Department] embodies the University's commitments to community impact, Indigenization, and "diverse ways of knowing," as well as equity, diversity and inclusion." Admissions requirements, program requirements, assessment methods, and learning outcomes for the undergraduate and graduate programs are clear, appropriate, and aligned with degree-level expectations. The Review Team noted that the programs are delivered by faculty that are "energetic and skilled teachers" with "the research and creative writing expertise needed to sustain the programs, promote innovation, and foster a rich intellectual climate." They further noted that the "enthusiasm and respect expressed by students for their [English] professors would be difficult to overstate."

Overall, the Department offers an exceptional undergraduate and graduate learning experience within and beyond the classroom with initiatives such as its Writer-in-Residence program, practica courses, and dedicated student spaces. "At both the graduate and undergraduate level, [the Department] supports student success while upholding rigorous academic standards. The Department educates students in specialized areas of knowledge, nurtures skill development, and offers impressive opportunities for experiential learning. [The Department] offers a coherent curriculum characterized by appropriate variety in subject matter, an impressive degree of historical coverage, and attention to both new methods and socially important issues." The Review Team commended the Department on its historical and genre coverage, as well as the comprehensive training in methods and skills that it continues to offer, despite budget constraints, through dedicated faculty and innovative curriculum design. The Review Team also

commended the Department on the regular review of its curricula and proactive problem-solving, denoting a spirit of continuous improvement, noting that several of the recommendations they planned to make had already been explored or implemented by the Department. However, the Review Team noted that further changes to curricula or supervisory practices will be needed should there be continued or increased financial constraints and in light of upcoming retirements.

The Head of the Department of English and Creative Writing and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences submitted their responses to the External Reviewers' Report (February 26, 2026 and March 13, 2026, respectively), addressing the recommendations, identifying follow-up actions, and providing clarification or corrections, as appropriate. The Senate Program Development Committee (PDC) Final Assessment Report and Implementation Plan (April 2026) considered all the above documentation. The Executive Summary and Implementation Plan, along with any response from the area on the final recommendations, were submitted to Senate in May 2026.

Final Recommendations and Implementation Plan (in priority order)

Final recommendations were arrived at by the Program Development Committee, following a review and assessment of the External Reviewers report and the responses from the Head of the Department of English and Creative Writing and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

Recommendation 1: That the Department report on efforts to adapt graduate courses to both streams (Literature and Literature and Creative Writing), along with the respective program requirements, such that both cohorts may satisfy their program requirements by completing the same courses. (Should the creative-writing MA fall under further pressure, the differentiation in the profiles of the two streams would essentially come down to the culminating thesis, defined as scholarly in the Literature stream and creative in Literature and Creative Writing stream.)

[PDC notes that the Department is in the process of completing the required PDC Forms and looks forward to receiving them.]

Agents: Head, AAU Council

Completion by: Mid-Cycle Report

Recommendation 2: That the Department report on efforts to:

- a. allow graduate students to take cross-career courses (courses double-numbered as 4000 and 8000) toward their degree, up to a maximum of 1/3 of the course requirements consistent with the Policy on Cross-Career Courses; and/or to take one or two 8000-level courses in a cognate discipline toward their degree.
- b. work with other disciplines to develop an interdisciplinary FAHSS graduate-level course, allowing for limited faculty resources to be shared among departments.

Agents: Head, AAU Council, Dean

Completion by: Mid-Cycle Report

Recommendation 3: That the Department review its undergraduate curriculum and consider:

- a. adjusting second and third year course descriptions, where possible, to accommodate creative-writing activity, allowing those courses to count towards the creative-writing stream program requirements.
- b. merging practica courses with the *Windsor Review* instead of a small independent press.

Agents: Head, AAU Council

Completion by: Mid-Cycle Report

Recommendation 4: That the Department consider and report on the appropriateness and feasibility of redefining the responsibilities and role of either the Undergraduate Chair or Graduate Chair and/or developing a structure allowing for a more equitable distribution of service work across all faculty.

Agents: Head, Faculty Members

Completion by: Mid-Cycle Report